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# **The Caucasus Conflict and Russian Security: the Russian Armed Forces Confront Chechnya**

## **Part One, Section One: From Intervention to the Outskirts of Grozny**

### **(Military-Political Events from 11 December to 31 December)**

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*Note: This article is based on open source literature published in the Russian press, and items broadcast on Russian radio and TV. Most, but not all, of the reports are from the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). During the intervention, Russian government and Chechen sources accused one another of placing disinformation in the press. This effort does not aim to prove one point of view correct. It's aim is merely to provide a framework and some logic for the events that have occurred and their consequences.*

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#### **Part One, Section One: From Intervention to the Outskirts of Grozny**

#### **(Military-Political Events from 11 December to 31 December)**

*"No territory has the right to leave Russia."*  
President Yeltsin on Russian TV, 27 December 1994

*"It's good to be king."*

**Comedian Mel Brooks, The History of the World**

As New Year's Eve approached, Russian military gun sights remained pointed at the Presidential Palace of Chechen President Dzhokhar Dудayev. A showdown awaited between Russia's finest, its airborne and marines, and the chiseled, wily, and experienced freedom fighters and mercenaries of Chechnya. President Boris Yeltsin and Defense Minister Pavel Grachev both had hoped for a quick victory.

But the battle over the fate of the Presidential Palace began long before this confrontation in the heart of Grozny. For the past three years Russian and Chechen negotiators fought with one another over the fate of the republic and each time the negotiations resulted in a stalemate. Meanwhile Russia, troubled by many other issues, helplessly watched the situation in the republic deteriorate and, in the opinion of the security services, become a threat to Russian national security.

Finally losing his patience, Yeltsin decided to act. He initially utilized the Dудayev-opposition among the Chechen population as his intermediary, encouraging them to attack Dудayev's forces. Simultaneously, he tried to surreptitiously support them with arms, training, and personnel. The result was a blown secret or "black operation" that implicated the Russian Federal Counterintelligence Service (FSK) and the Russian military as participants in the operation.

His hand exposed, Yeltsin decided to play his ace and intervene with Russian forces, a decision that quickly caused open dissension within the Russian High Command. Initial results of the campaign supported those opposed to the action. The intervention was conducted by poorly briefed officers who were leading untrained conscripts unprepared for battle and backed by inadequate rules of engagement (ROE)<sup>1</sup>. The officers and conscripts were met with smoldering hatred from many of the republic's inhabitants, Chechen and Russian alike, and as a result an already embattled and weakened President lost the support of long term admirers and reformists, and won the undesired support of the Russian right (in particular, Vladimir Zhirinovsky). Images of the Russian intervention into Chechnya will influence the domestic, regional and international consequences of Yeltsin's decision.

This paper's primary purpose is to serve as a preliminary historical assessment and documentation of the events as they transpired, examining the intervention through a discussion of the rationale for the action, the legal basis for the action, command and control arrangements, force structure, strategy and tactics of both sides, psychological operation issues, and officer and soldier morale. Hopefully this discussion will provide analysts a synopsis from which to develop a better understanding of how civil-military relations worked (or did not work) during the action, the cooperation and problems that arose among Yeltsin's praetorian guard (the Ministry of Defense [MOD], MVD, and FSK), how both sides used psychological weapons, to include the press, to their advantage, and how the intervention gradually escalated into ruthless warfare on the streets of Grozny today and most likely into the Caucasus mountains tomorrow. This could lead to a situation wherein the Russian security services may have to remain in the area for years and at best confront an environment of snipers and civilian resistance, or at worst civil war.

This article on the subject of the Russian intervention into Chechnya is divided into two parts. The first part covers military-political events from 11-31 December (from the intervention to the arrival of Russian units on the outskirts of Grozny). Part two of this article covers military activities during the same period. Later, a second article will cover events in Chechnya during the January-May timeframe.

### ***Russian rationale for the intervention.***

"The current situation threatens Russia's vital interests, national security, territorial integrity, social stability and peace, legislators emphasized."<sup>2</sup>

The Russian Duma, 8 December 1994

Russians first appeared in the Caucasus region during the reign of Catherine the Great, when Russia's most famous commander Alexander Suvorov and Prince Grigori Potemkin led operations deep into the region.<sup>3</sup> It soon became clear to these and other military leaders that Russia needed to bring ethnic elements on the northern side of the mountain range (and desiring independence) under some type of Russian control. Otherwise, commanders could not ensure the future security of lines of communication through the region and beyond to the Black Sea.

General Aleksei Petrovich Ermolov, who had successfully fought against Napoleon, later took steps to further this end, establishing a series of fortresses along the so-called Caucasian Line.<sup>4</sup> This idea triggered alarm among the 50 or so ethnic groups in the area, separated by language and the broken terrain of the Caucasus. Ermolov attempted to coopt friendly villages and sought the destruction of those elements that didn't cooperate. Scholar Firuz Kazemzadeh believes this contributed to the transformation of the struggle into a "holy war."

In 1834, the religious title of Imam was assumed by the now infamous Shamil. He took over the Chechen resistance and attempted to unify all Muslim tribes against Russia. Russian forces assisted in the cohesion of the region by offending local pride through the confiscation of weapons from native warriors. A war ensued that, according to Russian General Rostislav A. Fadeev, tore Chechnya from Russian hands and forced Russia to spend time restoring the security of the Caucasian Line. Chechen resistance eventually altered Russian strategy as well, forcing it to change from surgical incursions to sieges. In 1859 Shamil was captured and Russia sent nearly 500,000 North Caucasians to Turkey.

During the First World War, Chechens eventually sided with the Reds in Russia and even aided in the restoration of Bolshevik power in the region. As a reward the Chechen Oblast was formed in November 1922, and together with the Ingush Oblast in 1936 formed the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR). Overwhelmingly agrarian, the Chechens fought the forcible reorganization of land, and in 1937-38 endured Stalin's purges and the arrest of many local leaders.

The Second World War saw many non-Slavic, North Caucasian held German prisoners of war exploited by the Nazis and used against the Soviet Union, buttressed by the tradition of resistance to Russian rule in these peripheral regions. Stalin later sought retribution and on 23 February 1944 charged Chechens with betrayal of the Motherland and deported most of the

425,000 Chechens and Ingushis. Khrushev re-established the Chechen-Ingush ASSR on 11 February 1957. The 1959 census showed Chechens totaled 419,000, and this number grew to 611,000 by 1970. The ASSR included 135,000 Ingushis and 336,000 Russians in the republic as well. The Soviet government had, however, settled enough Russians in the area to rearrange regional demographics. Renewed ethnic tension was inevitable. As one scholar noted:

If the past is any indication of the future of Russo-Chechen relations, the current conflict in Chechnya will not resolve the deep and historic causes of dispute. Recurring Chechen resistance against Russian domination is ample testament to the determination of the Chechens to break free. No less apparent is the determination of the Russian government to preserve the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation...the Chechen case is far more significant than the tiny size of Chechnya would suggest. If Russia yields in this instance, other minority republics in the North Caucasus and elsewhere are apt to seize upon the precedent to demand their own independence...hot pursuit of Chechen rebels may well drive them across the frontiers of the Chechen Republic, thereby carrying the war into neighboring republics...<sup>5</sup>

Analysts studying the Russian rationale for intervening in Chechnya must consider this historical background. It clarifies how both sides historically legitimize their actions and perceptions of one another's motives.

Regarding the December 1994 intervention by Russian forces into Chechnya, analysts should first consider the situation faced by the Yeltsin regime. He was confronted with, in his opinion, an illegal government that had failed to seriously negotiate over the course of the past three years. At the same time, Chechnya had transformed itself into a center for terrorists, criminals and drug kingpins, with many tied to the Chechen mafia.

Chechnya started its current revolution on 21 August 1991, two days after the August coup in the former Soviet Union, and declared its independence from Russia on 6 September 1991. A former Soviet Air Force General, Dzhokhar Dudayev was invited to the post of president by the Amalgamated Congress of the Chechen People from Estonia (where some Chechens were in exile). Later, he was popularly elected and stated he wanted to free Chechnya from Russia. Many Russians in the current regime considered the elections illegal and therefore characterized Dudayev's presidency as illegitimate.<sup>6</sup> Russia's Fifth Congress of People's Deputies decreed the elections illegal and Dudayev's regime unconstitutional.<sup>7</sup> Dudayev eventually, in the spring of 1993, dissolved the Chechen parliament, and in June of 1993 his presidential guard clashed with those protesting parliament's dissolution and killed nearly 50 people. By the latter half of 1993, a Dudayev-opposition developed and initiated a small-scale guerrilla war. By the spring of 1994 the Dudayev-opposition had called upon Russia to support it and help establish constitutional order. This led to the dismal attack in November of 1994 led by the Dudayev opposition and supported by the Russian security services.<sup>8</sup>

President Yeltsin, while addressing the Russian people for the first time on 27 December about the intervention (more than two weeks after it had started), underscored the illegitimacy of the Chechen leader. He stated that :

- elections of the Chechen President were held under conditions of essentially martial law and only in certain districts of the then existing Chechen-Ingush Republic.
- the present leadership was not recognized either by the former legitimate authorities of Chechnya or the federal authorities of the Russian Federation or the world community.
- the conclusion is that the regime is unlawful and has violated the fundamental requirements of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, a position first taken in 1991.

[9](#)

Yeltsin added that neither authorities nor law exist in Chechnya, only armed units devoted to Dudayev. Sometimes bloody confrontation among armed groups displaced political life, and divided Chechnya into zones, each with its own leaders and illegal armed units:

The Grozny regime has used force to drive Chechen society down the path of crime. The population of Chechnya has, in effect, been forced to fend for itself. The republic's economy has been ruined. Law enforcement has come to a halt. Violence and robbery have become everyday occurrences, while arbitrariness has become the guiding principle of life. [10](#)

The postal service has not functioned in Chechnya for a year and a half. Communication lines are down. The amount in pensions alone that is owed to the republic is 105 billion rubles. All funds earlier paid out for these purposes were used by the Grozny leadership to buy weaponry. [11](#)

Russian MVD chief Victor Yerin made it clear that his ministry was intent on stopping the "orgy of violence" in Chechnya and that the use of force was inevitable. Quoting statistics to support his case, Yerin noted that in just eight months of 1994 nearly 1700 freight cars and containers were plundered on the Grozny section of the North Caucasus Railroad. In addition, the perpetrators of hundreds of criminal acts committed across the Caucasus region found refuge on the republic's territory, and even terrorist groups trained in Chechnya. Approximately one in three individuals prosecuted for forgery in Russia hail from Chechnya, Yerin noted, and Chechen inhabitants make up 42% of those involved in cases of embezzlement in the credit and financial system.

While some Chechens were getting rich, the working population was leading a life of semipoverty with no rights. Gangsters and criminals operated unopposed and ruthlessly suppressed any resistance. Yerin noted that events this fall showed that the criminal regime "was on the brink and would not stop at mass violence against its own people in order to cling to power." [12](#)

Yeltsin underscored this fact. He ended his TV address on 27 December by stating that the Chechen situation exerted a destructive effect on the stability of Russia, had become one of the main internal threats to the security of the state, and therefore his intention was to rapidly restore order in the republic in order to normalize life. Therefore the main mission of the armed forces was to disarm bandit formations and collect or destroy heavy weapons. [13](#)

Leonid V. Smirnyagin, a member of Yeltsin's Presidential Council, considered the time to be right for such an operation. He noted that Russia was now intervening because "the situation is

much better than two years ago." He cited as evidence treaties with other Muslim regions, which ensured calm in the area when Russian forces intervened. He also talked of the emergence of a Russian ally in Georgia in place of an anti-Russian government that had supplied Chechnya with arms. President Shevardnadze of Georgia would ensure that no other mercenaries or arms would cross its borders into Chechnya, The collapse of the Chechen economy during the tenure of Chechen President Dzhokhar Dудayev, who was slowly losing some of his popularity, also figured in Smirnyagin's thinking. <sup>14</sup>

Important individuals both within and outside the Russian government also supported the intervention. One reason, of course, was the armed forces' attempt to save face over the failed November attack. The FSK-supported Chechen attack by the Dудayev-opposition in November not only was repulsed and ended in failure but also implicated Russian military and FSK complicity, which damaged both Yeltsin's and Grachev's credibility (the latter had denied any support to the action at the time). Apparently Yeltsin's advisors promised him a quick victory much like the U.S. action in Haiti. One correspondent noted that the Armed Forces General Staff specialists tried to dissuade Yeltsin from conducting army operations but failed. The view of the interior troops command (a subordinate of the MVD) was more convincing and prevailed, according to the same correspondent. <sup>15</sup> An interior troops commander, according to another account, called for an intervention but specified that the army must lead it. <sup>16</sup> Minister of Defense Grachev, for his part, appeared overly optimistic. In a now infamous statement, he was quoted by the press on 29 November as stating that he could capture Grozny with "one airborne regiment within two hours." <sup>17</sup> Yeltsin gave the go ahead sign.

A second obvious reason for the intervention was offered by Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, who stated that a state has a right to use force to restore law and order, and to eliminate a "free crime economy zone" on which bandit gangs and the narcotics mafia based their existence. <sup>18</sup> He also said that the use of the army was allowed under the Code of Behavior adopted at the recent CSCE Budapest summit. <sup>19</sup> This would allow Russian policy to prevent, in the first place, Chechnya from breaking away and starting the "domino effect" in the region, and to prevent the destruction of the territorial integrity of Russia. <sup>20</sup>

Additional aims of the operation offered by others included: eliminating, as Presidential Council member Dmitriy Volkogonov noted, the criminal sore on the body of Russia; restoring some legitimacy to the Chechen leadership <sup>21</sup>; protecting the strategically significant railway lines and oil pipelines that cross Chechnya <sup>22</sup>; and defending the welfare of Chechens and local Russians caught in an "inter-Chechen" conflict (some, such as Grachev, were worried that the Chechens would use the Russians as human shields).

Some very personal reasons of the Kremlin leadership for the intervention were also cited. For example, some analysts predicted that Yeltsin's motivation for intervening was to improve his reelection chances by demonstrating resolve <sup>23</sup>; while Grachev's motivation was either to justify the renegotiation of the CFE flank limits (due to the threat in the North Caucasus Military District), <sup>24</sup> to get more money for the military budget, <sup>25</sup> or to confirm Yeltsin's belief that he was the best defense minister "of all times and peoples." <sup>26</sup> A goal of both of these men possibly was to take a stock of nuclear weapons out of Dудayev's hands, a charge not substantiated anywhere but alluded to by Dудayev himself (see section on PSYOP below). All of these goals

were obtainable in the event of a "victorious Blitzkrieg in Chechnya with the subsequent lightning establishment of a dictatorship all over the country." <sup>27</sup>

A final rationale for intervention requiring the closest attention was that offered by Federation Council Chairman Vladimir Shumeiko, who described the operation as a "peacekeeping mission, to separate the warring sides," such as Russia is undertaking in CIS states. <sup>28</sup> Russian Presidential consultant to the President's analytical center, Arkady Popov, felt that Russia may go to Chechnya as a "forcible peacekeeper", to include disarming the two conflicting sides by introducing a limited contingent of Russian troops. <sup>29</sup> Members of a parliamentary committee of North Ossetia, the Russian republic bordering on Chechnya, noted that "the way from North Ossetia to Chechnya can be open only for peacekeeping forces."

As a rationale for intervention, peacekeeping would have offered Yeltsin a non-aggressive way to rationalize for entering Chechnya and rid it of the arms and, over time, even the criminal elements that had bothered him and the Russian state. The move may have received international sanction and much less opposition from the Russian Parliament and public. If peacekeeping was the actual intention of the Russian military buildup, that is to get at Dudayev under the peacekeeping cover, the plan was ruined when Russian military support of the opposition-backed assault was exposed.

**The legitimization of the use of force according to basic criteria is missing in these Russian efforts to rationalize the intervention. According to western thinking associated with the use of force and conduct of an operation, force can find legitimate use under the following criteria: was an expected political-military end-state identified? What are the chances of winning? Does the public understand the danger in the area and is public opinion with U.S.? <sup>30</sup> Are the actions in our national interest? The U.S. used to term this rationale the "Weinberger Doctrine."**

In June of 1994 one Russian general <sup>31</sup> conceded that Russian logic regarding the use of force in peacekeeping operations was driven by criteria very similar to U.S. logic, except that Russia always asked for the consent of both sides before intervening. Yet Russian rationale for the intervention appears to have ignored some of the most important of these criteria, or at least has failed to answer these questions to the public's satisfaction. The Russian government appeared to look at this problem in a hasty manner (due to the failure of the "black operation?") through the prism of threats and interests without prior serious analysis of possible end-states, chances of winning quickly, or the state of public opinion, to cite but a few of the criteria.

A disjointed operation resulted, one beset by problems from the start that contain the seeds of Yeltsin's decline in political power. Another of Yeltsin's advisors, Emil Pain, correctly said he "feared the political battle in Moscow over Chechnya more than the Russian military's entry into the Caucasus." Owing to the lack of an identifiable end-state and a disastrous public relations campaign on the radio and TV (some felt public relations campaigns, due to content, were worse than German propagandist Josef Goebbel's World War II campaigns), Pain's warning looks increasingly on the mark from the perspective of Yeltsin's political opposition and anti-Yeltsin public opinion.

## *The Legal Case for Intervention*

"This is not the irony of history, but its vengeance: the Russian president marked the first anniversary of the Russian Constitution with the bombardment of Russian inhabited localities and a tank parade in the republics of the Northern Caucasus."

Stepan Kiselyov, deputy Editor-in-Chief of Moscow News

In the military newspaper Red Star, on 14 December 1994, President Yeltsin issued an appeal (dated 11 December 1994). It listed as the reason for the intervention into Chechnya "a threat to the integrity of Russia and to the safety of its citizens both in Chechnya and beyond its boundaries, and by the possibility of a destabilization of the political and economic situation. Our objective is to find a political solution to the problems of one of the subjects of the Russian Federation—the Chechen Republic—and to protect its citizens against armed extremism."<sup>32</sup>

On 9 December the Russian government had issued a Presidential decree "On Measures to Halt the Activity of Illegal Armed Formations on the Territory of the Chechen Republic and in the Zone of the Ossetian-Ingush Conflict." Citing Part 5 of Article 13 of the Constitution, the edict noted that "actions aimed at violating the integrity of the Russian Federation, undermining the security of the state, establishing armed formations, and inciting national and religious discord are prohibited in the territory of Russia and are outside the law." Yeltsin, on the basis of Article 80 of the Constitution, decreed:

1. That the Government of the Russian Federation be entrusted in accordance with points "d" and "e" of Article 114 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation with the use of all the means available to the state to guarantee national security, legality, the rights and freedoms of citizens, the preservation of public order, and the fight against crime and with the disarmament of all illegal armed formations.
2. That the present edict goes into effect on the day of its publication.

[signed] B. Yeltsin

Moscow, the Kremlin

9 December 1994 <sup>33</sup>

Yeltsin's use of the Constitution and bypassing of Parliament and the Constitutional Court was underscored in news coverage of the edict. Moscow News (MN) Deputy Editor-in-Chief Stepan Kiselyov, commenting on the Constitutionality of the action, wrote that eighteen months ago MN noted "what we have in front of us [referring to the Constitution] is the Fundamental Law of an authoritarian state capable of trampling on all the other laws." While the Russian electorate was aware of the dangers with which the Constitution was filled, they chose it over the Zhirinovsky (who has supported the Constitution), national-patriotism, and communism as well as "the Zorkins and Khasbulatovs disobeying Yeltsin."<sup>34</sup>

Russian authorities initially decided to declare a "State of Emergency Decree" in Chechnya. Yelena Mizulina, deputy chairman of the Constitutional Legislation and Legal Issue Committee, said a State of Emergency decree was possible and that the President could legally impose it without the Federation Council's (upper house of Parliament) consent. Mizulina said that under

the Emergency Situation Act the president can use the armed forces to cope in emergency situations. When challenged that this was a political and not military emergency, Mizulina quoted an article of the act stating that emergencies may handle natural or technological disasters, and that Chechnya falls into the former category. <sup>35</sup> In the end authorities backed off their initial intention and decided not to implement the State of Emergency decree. Parliament saw Chechnya as a deep trap into which they did not want to fall.

Presidential Aide Georgi Satarov noted on Russian TV on 12 December that there are specific reasons why a State of Emergency decree was not issued and why the Russian armed forces and MVD are serving together in Chechnya. According to Satarov, under a State of Emergency, only MVD troops can be used. Since the MVD is not equipped to battle forces with heavy artillery and tanks, a State of Emergency seemed inappropriate to handle the situation in Chechnya. President Yeltsin therefore referred to Chechnya as an armed conflict zone, which is a zone where Defense Ministry troops may be used. <sup>36</sup> Satarov said this was the legal basis for the use of the armed forces in Chechnya and explains why Grachev's forces legally are deployed in the region.

Izvestia reporter Valeriy Vyzhutovich reported, however, that until the State of Emergency was initiated in Chechnya it was impermissible to create an interim organ of government. The introduction of a territorial administration in the Chechen Republic before this happened was unconstitutional. <sup>37</sup> Meanwhile Yeltsin and his staff were busy preparing the groundwork for this to happen. On 20 December Rossiyskaya Gazeta published Yeltsin's edict and statute on the Russian Federation President's fully empowered representative in the Chechen Republic. <sup>38</sup>

At the same time President Dудаев, interviewed by the Italian press, served notice that nothing the Russians had done had intimidated him, to include the Presidential decree. He noted that independence is not an end in itself, but rather there are principles "that do not allow a whole people to live in the image and likeness of another..., not that of the Russians." <sup>39</sup>

Tamaz Abubakarov, head of the Chechen delegation negotiating with the Russians in Vladikavkaz and Minister of Economics and Finance, said that while there are common meeting grounds the sides differ on "the ways and methods to achieve their goals." The Presidential decree, in his opinion, did not provide a mechanism for confiscating weapons. He said Chechens would agree to disarm only if Russian troops would leave Chechen territory. <sup>40</sup> Duma Defense Committee Chairman Sergey Yushenkov, who talked with Dудаев's aide several times, said Dудаев had agreed to talk about a referendum and elections, even pre-term elections, but on one condition, that troops be withdrawn. <sup>41</sup> Chechen Foreign Minister Shamseddin Yusef, however, told INTERFAX that talks in Vladikavkaz "under Moscow's pressure" were made pointless by the Russian intervention. <sup>42</sup>

A final factor working against any Russian attempt at mediation was the fact that while talking with Dудаев's people Russia simultaneously held separate talks with the Dудаев-opposition, the group it had supported with arms, training, and men in the November attack on Grozny. As a result, Russian mediation was not considered impartial or credible by the Chechens but rather condescending. Thus the stage was set for a bloody confrontation.

Once the confrontation started and numerous fatalities occurred among the civilian population, Sergey Kovalev, President Yeltsin's Human Rights Commissioner, testified that he witnessed mass violations of human rights. He added that the matter had ceased being an internal affair of the Russian state or any other state, judging by international norms. Kovalev added that since Russia takes that position at conferences such as the U.N. Human Rights Commission, it should adopt it now. <sup>43</sup>

For the future, the Russian Security Council's legal basis for the justification and procedure for implementing the intervention will continue to have an impact throughout the Federation, as other republics ask if Yeltsin may decide to eliminate armed groups on their territory under the same rationale. The question of "*what to do about the lack of parliamentary and constitutional court oversight over the president and his use of the constitution?*" will receive serious attention and will undoubtedly have some impact on the upcoming Russian elections. Once again, Yeltsin ignored Parliament, and his attack on the rebellious region of Chechnya will impair Federalism.

### ***Command and Control.***

The Russian decision-maker for the Chechen intervention was the Russian Security Council. It began as and has remained the political command and control element of the operation. Initially Prime Minister Chernomyrdin was in charge of the operation. As Izvestiya announced on 15 December:

As soon as the president's ultimatum was announced, the headquarters for coordinating all action in the republic was secretly set up, headed by V. Chernomyrdin. An Interim Information Center was then created. After the troops went into Chechnya, operational leadership of the military-political operation in the North Caucasus was given to first Vice premier O. Soskovets. <sup>44</sup>

First Vice Premier Oleg Soskovets created an operations center to coordinate the activity of the federal organs of executive power in Moscow. Faced with the threat of possible terrorism all over Russia by groups of people of Chechen nationality, the center has monitored the protection of important installations, security, the observance of the legality and rights of its citizens, and maintenance of public order everywhere except Chechnya itself. Within the Duma, an operational headquarters was established and headed by Valentin Kovalev. <sup>45</sup> This governmental agency, of course, does not belong to the President as the Security Council does.

On the territory of Chechnya, Russian Nationalities Minister Nikolay Yegorov, by Yeltsin's edict now a deputy prime minister of the Russian Federation and the extraordinary presidential representative in Chechnya, coordinated the actions of the "power" structures, that is the elements of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Federal Counter-intelligence Service which are subordinate to him under Yeltsin's edict. Vyacheslav Mikhaylov, another deputy chairman, provided backup for the negotiating process between the federal authorities and the warring sides in Chechnya. The refugee and other humanitarian problems were handled by Sergey Shoygu, Minister of the Ministry of Emergency Situations, responsible for handling affairs associated with civil defense, emergency situations, and natural disasters. <sup>46</sup>

Yegorov proved not a popular appointee. Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for Defense, Sergey Yushenkov, called Yegorov "one of the initiators of and those to blame for the latest events in Chechnya, and his promotion was evidence that the activities recently carried out in Chechnya are planned to be expanded." <sup>47</sup> Another source called Yegorov the "advocate of war in the North Caucasus." <sup>48</sup>

It was soon apparent, in spite of the appointments of Chernomyrdin, Soskovets, and Yegorov, that these civilians were unable to provide sound explanations about what tasks were set before Russian troops in Chechnya, what the overall operation looked like, and what they could do about it. Soskovets, according to government circles, found it hard to keep control over the operation. It appeared to many observers that the military, under the guise of military secrecy or "need to know" had taken control of the entire operation. As one correspondent wrote:

The editorial office [Izvestia's] has information to the effect that by early September, long before decisive action against Chechnya began, the experts who had earlier taken part in analyzing and forecasting events in the republic had stopped getting operational information. The question arises-why did the military require total secrecy? The explanation should really be sought in the fact that the military initially decided to assume the role of politicians in the Chechen crisis [underlining not in original]. <sup>49</sup>

Presidential Council member Smirnyagin expanded on the problem of military supremacy over the operation. He foresaw a danger in the fact that not only the power (security) ministries could assume the function of shaping immediate political tasks but also field commanders, who were starting to operate autonomously. <sup>50</sup> If true, this explanation would offer an explanation as to why fighting and bombing continued after Yeltsin's decree to stop it. This assumes extremely weak command and control over military units which is difficult to fathom in a conflict as centralized as Chechnya.

Co-Chair of the Democratic Russian Party, Galina Starovoitova, noted that "**on the whole we must draw the conclusion about the absence of any mechanism of civilian control over military structures in our society. This is a consequence of the refusal to appoint a civilian defense minister in Russia. Absolute impotence has been demonstrated by the highest legislative body of authority-the Federal Assembly-which has been deprived of any serious information whatsoever.**" <sup>51</sup>

Speaking specifically about the military, Grachev himself noted that on 29 November the Security Council had appointed him to lead a group that included the Russian power ministers to settle the conflict. <sup>52</sup> This point was confirmed in the 7 December edition of Red Star, the Russian Armed Forces newspaper, which stated that the appointment of Grachev to lead the group was confirmed by a special decree of the Russian president. <sup>53</sup> That is, Grachev had overall control of the operation from the Security Council's viewpoint and informed Soskovets and Yegorov of the progress of the operation. This informal arrangement was a type of interagency group to control the conflict. It was insufficient to do so, and resulted in civilians getting the blame for a situation over which it had little or no control. The military, on the other hand, looked like the gang that couldn't shoot straight.

The Caucasus Military District, under the command of Colonel-General Alexei Mityukin, was in apparent operational charge of the operation on the ground at the start of the conflict.<sup>54</sup> The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), the Federal Counterintelligence Service (FSK), and an operational group from the Russian General Staff supported him. The General Staff group included officers of the Main Operational, Main Intelligence, and Main Organizational-Mobilization administrations.

Either Yeltsin, Yegorov, or Grachev, after witnessing some initial failures, decided to purge the top military commanders in charge of operations in Chechnya. Grachev first offered the operation to the Deputy Ground Forces Commander, Colonel-General Edward Vorobyev, who refused to take command, and so Grachev reportedly took over direct command of the campaign himself. TASS reported that all together six commanders had been dismissed for "indecisiveness and inaction" at a meeting of the senior armed forces leadership in Mozdok but only gave details of five dismissals. Grachev purportedly sacked the entire top leadership of the North Caucasus army group -- Colonel-General Alexei Mityukin, his first deputy Lieutenant-General Vladimir Chirindin and chief of staff Lieutenant-General Vladimir Potapov.

TASS also reported that Grachev told First Deputy Defense Minister Georgy Kondratyev and Deputy Ground Troops Commander Eduard Vorobyov to resign.<sup>55</sup> The latter two generals were specifically responsible for peacekeeping operations, the former at the ministry level and the latter at the ground force headquarters level. A later Itar-Tass report stated that General Valeriy Tretyakov would replace Mityukhin as the leader of the North Caucasus Military District, and named General Leongiy Shevtsov as chief of staff of the district, and a General Kvashnin was appointed as first deputy commander of troops.<sup>56</sup> Only two hours later, yet another ITAR-TASS press release reported that an MOD official described reshuffling in the leadership of the operation as "disinformation aimed at destabilizing the situation in the North Caucasus."<sup>57</sup> Grachev later announced that he had sacked none of the generals but had retained control of the operation himself and continued in this position through at least New Year's day.

The problem for Western analysts with this command and control scenario is that it practically ignores the role of the General Staff. According to Russia's national security policy, the General Staff is the operational arm of the Security Council. Since all indications are that it is the Security Council and Minister of Defense that are running the operation, what has happened to the General Staff? What support are they providing to Grachev and the Security Council? This is the missing key to the answer to many of the questions about military operations, to include issues of competence and discipline, in Chechnya. The Chief of the General Staff, General Kolesnikov, has virtually not appeared either physically or in the press since the operation began.

The presence of General Colin Powell, Kolesnikov's U.S. counterpart, during Desert Storm was a constant reminder that the military-political and General Staff equivalent (the Joint Staff) link was never broken among General Schwarzkopf, Secretary of Defense Cheney, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell and the President. The absence of Kolesnikov is very disturbing from this point of view, since it implies serious problems between the Minister of Defense and General Staff.

### ***The Consequences of the Intervention***

Throughout the initial weeks of the operation that led to the New Year, the vast majority of Yeltsin's advisors and political appointees did all they could to put a positive spin on events in Chechnya. Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, for example, listed four achievements. First, the source of danger posed by the situation in Chechnya was localized and isolated. Second, the Dudayev regime was delegitimized. Third, armed gangs were severed from the outside world. Finally, Dudayev's forces no longer will perpetrate lawless deeds with impunity. <sup>58</sup>

However, people beyond the closed circle of the Security Council, of which Kosyrev is a member, had a more negative view of the events in Chechnya. For example, it is naive to believe that the participation of foreign mercenaries on the territory of Chechnya will go unnoticed by Russia. Their participation most likely will complicate Russia's relations with the mercenary's native countries in the future. For purposes of this article, more negative aspects of the intervention are divided into domestic, regional and international consequences.

Domestic. Perhaps in the long run some of the factions and interest groups that spoke out so strongly against Yeltsin's decision will approve of them. But one thing is for sure: Yeltsin's decision in the short run has threatened to destroy his relationship with the reformist groups in Moscow, especially with his former Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar and other democracy and human rights advocates; to alienate parts of the Russian military, particularly within the High Command; and has threatened to strengthen the credibility of Russia's nationalist extremists. <sup>59</sup>

Political support was against Yeltsin from the start of the intervention, as Russia's Choice, Yabloko, the Party of Russian Unity and Concord, the Democratic Party of Russia, the Communist Party, the Agrarian Party, and Women of Russia opposed his decision. Only Vladimir Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party and three other groups of deputies, the Russian National Unity Party, the nationalist Russian Path, and the Liberal Democratic 12 December Union approved of the invasion. <sup>60</sup> Besides a lack of political support, the intervention undermined confidence in democratic institutions. In order to maintain power in the face of the strong opposition to his decision, Yeltsin may resort to invoking a moratorium on elections, which will further enrage the opposition.

One State Duma deputy, Vladimir Lysenko, stated that Yeltsin cannot invoke an authoritarian regime even if he wanted because the country now lacks support for authoritarianism (such as ideology, apparatuses, and power structures of the kind needed). He noted that the President's action in Chechnya was rejected by the majority of the country's population (60% of the population was against the intervention). Lysenko added that there is a crisis of political leadership at the democratic flank and at the center of the political spectrum that is growing. Divisions within the political elite continue, but they are not over market problems or orientation toward the West, but rather over power and property ownership. The question raised again in Russia is "what kind of authoritarian regime will assert itself in Russia, a centralized or a decentralized one?" Even regional elites may now actively oppose any attempt to return to a unitary state and instead try to uphold a strengthening of authoritarian foundations at the regional level (holding no elections, ignoring representative power bodies, and so on). <sup>61</sup>

The Army's fate is the most complicated and controversial since so much depends on the Kremlin's internal politics after the intervention, and on Yeltsin's personal relationship with

Grachev and the other power ministers. During the initial fighting, it was often difficult to ascertain if Yeltsin controlled the military or vice versa. Military secrecy kept many issues in the hands of the military from the start of the operation, and combined with the lack of civilian control of the military through the Parliament, it is little wonder that people questioned who was in charge. A more chilling point is that whether democracy or nationalism survives is not as important for the current power ministers as whether Yeltsin survives. If he does not, then wholesale changes will take place at the upper echelons of these institutions.

From the beginning the Russian leadership denied that it was losing army support due to the developments in Chechnya. However, initial problems with morale and open splits in the military leadership, even at its highest levels, combined with dislike within the High Command for Minister of Defense Grachev, make loss of support for the leadership's decision to intervene believable. If true, then many military men are looking for a new political leadership to follow.

The army could benefit or lose from the intervention. On the one hand, they could receive new budget allocation from the Duma and get more money for equipment, training, and social care. Undoubtedly the armed forces will need money. Reformist economist Grigory Yavlinsky estimated military costs to be one trillion rubles (\$290) a month just to cover operations.<sup>62</sup> How much the Duma will grant is another matter. Yegor Gaidar noted that if Russia has more conflicts such as Chechnya with similar costs it "will need another kind of military spending, a remilitarized economy, broader powers of the police to oppose terror, and the freedom of the press will be curtailed."<sup>63</sup> Spending money on the military will keep the country backward, another analyst warned, since a protracted guerilla war could cost 10 trillion rubles a year which is enough to renovate and modernize the coal industry or increase the populations buying power. He further implied that since the defense industry couldn't get budget funding in 1995, a military solution to the Chechen crisis became the only way for the military-industrial complex to "get around its production problems."<sup>64</sup> This hardly sounds like a reasonable solution for military research and development, since budget restrictions will limit military spending as much as the low tech war in Chechnya.

On the other hand, the Army may also suffer a serious setback in morale and internal cohesion due to their poor performance and loss of key leaders. Army leaders must insure that the split in the upper ranks of the army that resulted in the rumored dismissal of three deputy ministers of defense does not spread and involve other top ranking officers. This situation is extremely sensitive. It is important to note that the army could move beyond the control of the politicians. If, for example, the leaders of military districts decide to side with local politicians, the army could split along regional lines. Or, if opinion polls are correct, certain army leaders, such as General Lieutenant Alexander Lebed, who possesses charisma and a solid reputation among many Russians, may attempt a political career, maybe in or maybe out of uniform. This is a time of special danger for the armed forces. They will watch the Duma closely in the coming months, and vice versa.

Russian authorities will also review how the armed forces, FSK, and MVD worked together. The operation in Chechnya was disjointed at first and often found one security service blaming the other or carrying out roles not normally expected of it. Ingush President Ruslan Aushev, a Hero of the Soviet Union for his war exploits in Afghanistan, said the campaign was carried out

incompetently, stressing there "was no coordination between the paratroops, interior ministry forces, and regular troops. They have no clear orders and no idea what they're doing." <sup>65</sup>

Equally ominous is the fact that Grachev's reform and his desire to transform the army into a mobile force have had some organizational success but still appear to need much work in the theory of fighting a local conflict or operation other than war. The armed forces appeared ready to fight yesterday's war in Chechnya (and perhaps this is why some commanders refused to lead, that is they did not know how to conduct a local conflict but only a large scale one on the plains of Europe). Analysts must ask, what did the armed forces learn from Afghanistan? With no NCO corps, inadequate training for regular let alone urban combat, and a demoralized force, the army's performance can be rationalized. However, the end result can only enhance the popularity of generals Lebed and Gromov, and will certainly discredit Grachev and ultimately Yeltsin.

One final consequence is that the army may have found a new rationale for its presence and action on Russian territory. Minister of Defense Grachev noted that the army may remain in Chechnya permanently, and MVD chief Yerin stated that the success of this operation will give assurance to many other regions of Russia that "we will not let them get into a state in which Chechnya has found itself." <sup>66</sup> It is hard to believe that the other Russian republics will consider this good news.

The lack of trust in democracy and army problems aside, perhaps the most serious political outcome of the intervention is that extremist views may take precedence over reformist views. Calls for a Greater Russia play into the extremists hands, and these calls gained a new following during the crisis. As Lysenko noted:

The extreme nationalist opposition, having supported the President's actions in Chechnya, at the same time advocate a more consistent and tougher enforcement of order...There is a great danger of these forces shifting their political positions from the state idea (which so far agitates the population in the social, not geographic or political, sense) to the ethnic (or religious) idea of setting Russians against non-Russians, and the Orthodox against the Muslims. <sup>67</sup>

Lysenko added that fertile soil exists to advance the national idea in Russia on an ethnic instead of a state basis, and to advance the ideas of Russian fascism. As an example, some 32% of respondents to a recent poll stated that the rights of Russians in the Russian Federation are infringed more than those of other ethnic groups. Zhirinovsky's showing in the vote in December 1993 was based on his "defending Russians and upholding a new order," for those who have forgotten. Many Russians, after the Chechen problem, do not regard those now in power as democrats, yet most (60%) want a democratic country and not a dictatorship led by the national idea. Therefore, the country must replace the current team with new democrats while it can, in the opinion of many, if democracy is to survive. <sup>68</sup>

Former Presidential Ethnic Affairs Adviser Galina Starovoitova, currently co-chairman of Democratic Russia, said that the intervention will "produce mistrust of the center's policy and centrifugal tendencies in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Takutia, Karelia, and other parts of the Russian Federation." These tendencies could play into the nationalists' hands. A number of

Russian republics were against the use of force in Chechnya. For example, the Republic of Buryatia said the developments in Chechnya threaten the integrity of Russia. Karelia "denounces the involvement of the army in the solution of internal problems of Russia." Chuvashin's State Council believed it "inadmissible to use the Russian Army in conflicts against civilian populations and to restore constitutional lawfulness in Chechnya." The Chelyabinsk region and Murmansk supported the government.<sup>69</sup>

**Regional.** For the long term, the impact of Yeltsin's decision on regional stability is hard to determine. The short term impact is already clear in that Chechnya made requests to foreign governments and was supported with men, material, and other types of assistance, thereby decreasing stability. The conflict could spark an urge to move away from Moscow's authority and democracy, and threatens to undermine peace efforts in other parts of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). It also will cast doubt on Moscow's ability to play a role in settling conflicts between or among Islamic states.

Emil Pain, the current Ethnic Affairs Adviser on the Presidential Council to Yeltsin, said the North Caucasus on the whole was quiet. Leaders of other republics in the region, however, were not as reassuring. Kalmyk President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov told Interfax that his republic, "situated too closely to the region," may become engulfed in the conflict. The Confederation of the Peoples of the Caucasus, asked by Chechnya to form a regional alliance "from the Caspian to the Black Sea" to resist the Russian intervention, agreed and thereby added to the destabilization. The President of the Confederation, Ali Aliev, warned on Russian TV that he had issued instructions for setting up offices to induct volunteers in Dabardo-Balkaria, Adygei, Ingushetia, Dagestan, Abkhazia, and North Ossetia. In Azerbaijan, the opposition Grey Wolves party told Interfax on 14 December that about 270 Grey Wolves had volunteered to go to Chechnya.<sup>70</sup> Other freedom fighters arrived from Ukraine, Pakistan and Jordan, among other countries. Those arriving from Ukraine perhaps posed the greatest potential future problem, especially concerning the fate of the Crimea.

According to William Conner, a U.S. expert on Ukraine, on 12 December 1994 the Ukrainian government officially stated that Chechnya is an internal Russian Federation affair, stressing its "adherence to the principles of territorial integrity and exclusively peaceful solutions to any disputes." The Ukrainian government further warned Ukrainian organizations and citizens not to interfere. Later, the Ukrainian Foreign ministry downplayed comparisons between Chechnya and Crimea and warned citizens against travel to Chechnya. By 21 December, President Leonid Kuchma stated that he had ordered government authorities to take an active role to stop Ukrainian citizens from participating in Chechnya. He did, however, express concern about escalation of the conflict and civilian casualties. The latter statements followed accusations by the Russian government that external forces, including mercenaries from Ukraine and other countries, had participated in the Chechen conflict with the Chechens.

There were, however, other reactions from Ukrainian bodies. Rukh condemned Russian actions in Chechnya on 12 December 1994, and the Ukrainian Republican Party sent a letter protesting the Russian intervention and actions in Chechnya to the Russian ambassador to Ukraine the same day. By 20 December 1994, the Ukrainian Parliament had weighed in against the casualties and

bloodshed in the operation, and the Ukrainian Democratic Party issued a protest against the Russian action, encouraging support of the Chechens.

More virulent were the words and actions of the Crimean Tatars and the Ukrainian National Self-Defense Organization (UNSO), the illegal paramilitary arm of the recently-legalized Ukrainian National Assembly (UNA). As early as 11 December, UNSO held a rally in Kiev attended by representatives from the Ukrainian Democratic Party, the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, and the Ukrainian Republican Party, during which word of Russian tank movements on Grozny was received. By 30 December 1994, UNSO admitted having approximately 20 members in Chechnya, while in Moscow, Russian Minister of Defense displayed what he claimed was a hat from a Ukrainian fighter in Chechnya, calling them "Banderites."<sup>71</sup>

The Crimean Tatars reported that 10 members had already gone to Chechnya on 12 December 1994, and the leader of the Crimean Tatar group in Crimea's Supreme Soviet drew a parallel between Russia's action in Chechnya and Ukraine's problems with the Crimean Republic.

One may characterize the Ukrainian government actions as very low profile during this period, declaring their intent to keep Ukrainians out of Chechnya, and non-governmental organizations which have sent volunteers to Chechnya to fight with the Chechens have not sent many. Moreover, the quantity of those from Ukraine appears no more than 100, from various sources rather from any one group and probably much less than those from other countries, and the figures cited have not been confirmed independently. The use by the Crimean Tatars of the Chechnya example for the Crimean Republic government, however, is ominous, as is the postponement of Russo-Ukrainian negotiations on interstate agreements.

Vladimir Lysenko, in commenting on regional consequences of the conflict, stated that averting a national war is not possible if Russian Cossacks appear in Chechnya. A great explosion would occur in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and other republics. A "Yugoslavization" of the conflict will result with everybody fighting everybody else, in Lysenko's opinion.<sup>72</sup> Existing Russian paramilitary groups would capitalize as well on such a situation, and they are under no one's control.

Another effect of the fighting was on peace operations in the region. In mid-December, according to Major General Vasiliy Yakushev, Commander of the Russian peacemaking forces in the area of conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia, a rally was held in Abkhazia to condemn Russian policy and to recruit volunteers for Chechnya. Russian Deputy Defense Minister Georgiy Kondratyev, during a visit a week later, asked Abkhazian Defense Minister Sultan Sosnaliyev if it was worth Russian lives put on the line to defend Abkhazians from Georgians, if Abkhazians on the side of the Chechens were killing Russian servicemen? Where was the logic in this, Kondratyev demanded? Thus the Russian leadership will review its position on this issue and other CIS peacekeeping missions as well in the near future.

Finally, separate countries in the region friendly to the Dудayev regime were asked for diplomatic support. Dудayev, for example, asked Turkey to mediate the conflict, and the Turkish foreign ministry responded by saying that "Turkey was the first to express its concern at the government level about the dispute in Chechnya and the need for a peaceful solution," concerns

that appear warranted. <sup>73</sup> Reports said Turkey earlier had agreed to grant Dudayev asylum in the so-called "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus." This arrangement was discussed in October of this year. <sup>74</sup>

**International.** There were international consequences for Russia as well. Many countries in the West and in Asia initially stated that the affair was an internal Russian one and there was little apprehension on the part of these governments. Later, however, many countries and organizations, to include the Economic Community and Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, called for a halt to the fighting (especially the bombing of innocent civilians) and directed concern toward protection of basic human rights. Even long time ally and friend Cuba voiced concern, saying that it regretted that negotiations have not worked so far and that it wanted a solution that put an end to the situation running counter to the legitimate interests of Russian people. <sup>75</sup>

Concern over Russian internal stability also concerned the international community. The threat of Chechen terrorism against Russian nuclear centers or other environmental objectives made the world uneasy. Any nuclear, biological or chemical incident engineered by the Chechens against the Russians could easily affect nations as far away as Africa.

Finally, Russia's weak military display may invoke confidence in certain other powers in the region if they were to confront Russia. This is not good for the region or for the world. China, for example, could have found relief in Russia's weakness knowing that they won't be attacked. Or, they may have found a motive to initiate an attack or offensive in the Far East or to seize part of Kazakhstan due to internal ethnic problems in Russia.

## ENDNOTES

1. Press reports indicate that the Russian military initially engaged in extremely limited aggressive action. When faced with mobs, one report says, neither smoke pots nor the notorious 'cheremukha' (riot gas) were used. Troops could have acted more resolutely if they wanted, the report added. See Leonid Smirnyagin, "Initial Task Fulfilled Successfully by Troops," Krasnaya Zvezda, 20 December 1994, p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-244, 20 December 1994, p 6. General Lieutenant Stanislav Kavun, Deputy Commander of the MVD's Internal Troops, said his soldiers were constrained by certain restrictions on the active use of weapons, and this led to a number of deaths early in the intervention. See Stanislav Kavun, "Our Aim is to Disarm the Armed Bandits," Rossiyskiye Vesti, 23 December 1994 p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-247, 23 December 1994, p 14.[BACK](#)

2. ITAR-TASS 8 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-237, 9 December 1994, p 20.[BACK](#)

3. This short historical sketch is based on an article by Robert F. Bauman entitled "Historical Perspective on the Conflict in Chechnya", which Dr. Bauman wrote for the journal Low Intensity Conflict and Law Enforcement. It will appear in the ? issue.[BACK](#)

4. This line marked the southern limit of Russian military outposts and settlements.[BACK](#)

5. Bauman, pp 17,18.[BACK](#)
6. "Chechnya," Moscow News, December 16-22, 1994, No. 50, p 1, 2.[BACK](#)
7. Valeriy Vyzhutovich, "Chechnya Will Spurn Kremlin's Representatives," Izvestiya, 20 December 1994, p 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-244, p 19.[BACK](#)
8. "Chechnya," Moscow News, December 16-22, 1994, No. 50, p 1, 2.[BACK](#)
9. ITAR-TASS 1140 GMT, 27 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-248, 27 December 1994, p 25.[BACK](#)
10. Ibid.[BACK](#)
11. Ibid., p 27.[BACK](#)
12. Vladimir Klimov, "The Use of Force was the Only Measure Capable of Halting the Orgy of Crime," Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 24 December 1994, p 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-248, 27 December 1994 p 36. By 13 December 21 investigating field groups of Russian MVD law enforcement officer , 1000 special purpose troops to police railroads were in Chechnya. See INTERFAX 13 December 1994 as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-240, 14 December 1994, p 15.[BACK](#)
13. Ibid., Yeltsin TV address.[BACK](#)
14. Moscow TV 12 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-239, 13 December 1994, p 16.[BACK](#)
15. Dmitriy Muratov, "The Country's Incumbent leadership will be put on Trial for the Reckless Adventure in Chechnya," Novaya Yezhednevna Gazeta, 14 December 1994 p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-241, 15 December 1994, p 40.[BACK](#)
16. Dmitriy Muratov, "Provocations and Casualties are being Planned," Novaya Yezhednevna Gazeta, 3 December 1994, p 1 as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-233, 5 December 1994, p 30.[BACK](#)
17. Moscow RIA, 29 November 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-235A, 7 December 1994, p 13.[BACK](#)
18. ITAR-TASS 15 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-241, 15 December 1994, p 42.[BACK](#)
19. INTERFAX 12 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-239, 13 December 1994, p 18.[BACK](#)
20. This aim stretched beyond the region in question to other contested areas of the former USSR. For example, Vladimir Zhirinovsky appealed to Yeltsin on 28 November to confirm that

"the Black Sea Fleet belongs to Russia, that Sevastopol is a Russian city, and to state, finally, that the Crimea is part and parcel of the Russian Federation." See FBIS-SOV-94-235A, 7 December 1994, p 6.[BACK](#)

21. In a 13 December 1994 RFE/RL release, Julia Wishnevsky reported that Yeltsin put before the upper house, the Federal Assembly, these three rhetorical questions: (1) Should the Russian Federation negotiate the status of Chechnya as a part of Russia, and is the parliament ready to introduce into the constitution an amendment on the right of Chechnya to secede, in view of the possible domino effect this would have on other secession-minded republics within the Russian Federation? (2) Should Russia talk to Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudyayev? (Yeltsin reminded parliamentarians that such a provision would necessitate the State Duma to formally recognize the 1991 election of Dudyayev as president.) (3) Citing a 25 March 1994 State Duma statement on the Chechen problem, which stated the necessity of free elections as a precondition for talks with the Chechen leadership, Yeltsin asked the deputies how they would organize free elections in Chechnya considering the current situation. Sovset, 13 December 1994.[BACK](#)

22. The Russian government has been insisting for months that oil from nearby Azerbaijan's planned \$7.4-billion oil project in the landlocked Caspian Sea should be routed through a pipeline to Russia's Black Sea port of Novorossiysk for export to the West. Russia's problem is that the pipeline goes right through the middle of Chechnya. While experts differ on how great a role the pipeline played in Russia's decision to invade the oil-rich republic, they agree that it is now a major strategic prize. CIS news, item 1219K, 19 December 1994.[BACK](#)

23. Stepan Kiselyov, Azer Mursaliyev, "Who Stands to Gain from the Invasion?", Moscow News, December 23-29 December 1994, No. 51, p 2.[BACK](#)

24. Vadim Markushin, "Russia must secure its own flanks, Russian Federation Armed Forces General Staff again voices concern...", Krasnaya Zvezda, 7 December 1994 p 3, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-236, 8 December 1994, p 15.[BACK](#)

25. At a conference in December 1994 Grachev noted that the military budget of 40.6 trillion rubles covers defense needs by only one-third. One day of peacekeeping in Abkhazia costs 2 billion rubles, in Tajikistan one day of the 201st's presence costs 15 billion rules, one day of joint games under NATO's Partnership for Peace program costs 1 billion rubles (for a battalion), and downsizing the officer corps by 200,000 men costs 11-12 million rubles for a colonel, 8-9 million for a major, and 6-7 million for a captain (20 monthly salary payments). The operation in Chechnya adds to this debt daily. See Victor Yershov, "The Defense Minister has it in for Everyone," Novaya Yezhnednevnyaya Gazeta, 9 December 1994 pp 1, 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-238, 12 December 1994 p 34. [BACK](#)

26. Ibid., Kiselyov and Mursaliyev.[BACK](#)

27. Ibid.[BACK](#)

28. Vladimir Socor, RFE/RL 16 December 1994, from Sovset 16 December 1994.[BACK](#)

29. Moscow RIA, 29 November 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-235A, 7 December 1994, p 15.[BACK](#)

30. Public opinion was very much against the Russian intervention. A poll from 17 December noted that 73% blamed the Russian Federation Government for the present crisis situation, 66% blamed the reformers, mafia, and breakup of the USSR, and 64% blamed Yeltsin for everything. The poll was conducted by the Russian Academy of Sciences. One in nine were prepared to place the military at the head of the country, and over one-half count on a strong leader capable of "instilling order in the country."[BACK](#)

31. Author's discussion with a Russian general in June, 1994 and cited in Krasnaya Zvezda, 13 July 1994 p 2. The Russian general noted that Russian criteria was the same as U.S. criteria for using force in a peacekeeping operation except that "we ask to be invited into a country and you do not. We will not intervene in a peacekeeping operation without the consent of both sides."[BACK](#)

32. "Appeal of the President of the Russian Federation B.N. Yeltsin to the Citizens of Russia," Krasnaya Zvezda, 14 December 1994 p 1, as reported in JPRS-UMA-94-055, 21 December 1994, p 31.[BACK](#)

33. "Edict of the President of the Russian Federation on Measures to Stop the Actions of Illegal Armed Formations in the Territory of the Chechen Republic and in the Zone of the Ossetian-Ingush Conflict," Krasnaya Zvezda, 14 December 1994, p 1, as reported in JPRS-UMA-94-055, 21 December 1994, p 31.[BACK](#)

34. Stepan Kiselyov, "Red Letter Day on the Calendar," Moscow News, December 16-22, 1994, No. 50, p 2. Zorkin was the head of the Constitutional Court and Khasbulatov the Speaker of Parliament.[BACK](#)

35. Moscow TV 11 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-238, 12 December 1994, p 23.[BACK](#)

36. Moscow Russian TV 12 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-239, 13 December 1994 p 16.[BACK](#)

37. Vyzhutovich, Ibid.[BACK](#)

38. Rossiyskaya Gazeta, 20 December 1994 p 1, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-246, 22 December 1994, p 23.[BACK](#)

39. L'Unita 12 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-238, 12 December 1994 p 17.[BACK](#)

40. ITAR-TASS 12 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-239, 13 December 1994, p 30.[BACK](#)

41. Russian TV 0500 GMT 13 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-239, 13 December 1994, p 31.[BACK](#)
42. INTERFAX 1810 GMT 12 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-239, 13 December 1994, p 28.[BACK](#)
43. Valeriy Yakov, "How Many More Children Must Die in Chechnya for Moscow to heed Kovalev's Voice?", Izvestiya, 23 December 1994 p 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-247, 23 December 1994, p 12.[BACK](#)
44. Vasiliy Kononenko, "Civilian Control of Operation Eroding," Izvestiya, 15 December 1994, p 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-240, 14 December 1994, p 17.[BACK](#)
45. Gleb Cherkasov, "Duma Ad Hoc Headquarters Confident in Russian Troops' Fighting Spirit and Denies Rumors of Massive Desertions," Segodnya, 22 December 1994, p 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-246, p 29.[BACK](#)
46. Aleksandra Lugovskaya, "Operations Center formed in Government," Rossiyskiye Vesti, 14 December 1994, p 1 as translated in FBIS-SOV-94-240, pp 15, 16.[BACK](#)
47. INTERFAX, 7 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-236, 8 December 1994, p 23.[BACK](#)
48. Vladimir Yemelyanenko, "New Vice Premier Stakes His Position on the Use of Force in the Caucasus," Moscow News, No. 50 December 16-22 1994, p 4.[BACK](#)
49. Vasiliy Kononenko, "Civilian Control of Operation Eroding," Izvestiya, 15 December 1994, p 2 as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-240, 14 December 1994, p 17.[BACK](#)
50. Ibid.[BACK](#)
51. Galina Starovoitova, "Reforms Fail Test in Chechnya," Moscow News, December 23-29, 1994, No. 51, p 1, 2.[BACK](#)
52. INTERFAX 5 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-234, 6 December 1994, p 39.[BACK](#)
53. Aleksandr Pelts, "Conflict Zone: Troops Ready to Act Decisively, but Talks Preferable," Krasnaya Zvezda, 7 December 1994 p 4, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-236, 8 December 1994, p 22.[BACK](#)
54. Sergey Bogdanov, "Chechnya: Despite Moscow's Assurances, Things are Moving Toward Real War," Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 14 December 1994, p 2 as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-241, 15 December 1994, p 52.[BACK](#)
55. CIS news, item 1222A, 22 December 1994.[BACK](#)

56. ITAR-TASS 1310 22 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-246, 22 December 1994, p 13.[BACK](#)

57. ITAR-TASS 1556 GMT 22 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-247, 23 December 1994, p 11.[BACK](#)

58. ITAR-TASS 1443 GMT 21 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-246, 22 December 1994, p 13.[BACK](#)

59. CIS news, item 1217 E, 17 December 1994.[BACK](#)

60. Julia Wishnevsky, RFE/RL, Sovset, 13 December 1994, and Vladimir Socor, RFE/RL, "Four Men in a Boat", Sovset, 20 December, 1994.[BACK](#)

61. Vladimir Lysenko, "An Authoritarian Regime is Inevitable," Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 22 December 1994, pp 1, 2, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-247, 23 December 1994, p 7, 8.[BACK](#)

62. CIS news, 1222C, 22 December 1994.[BACK](#)

63. INTERFAX 1410 GMT, 23 December 1994 , as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-248, 27 December 1994 p 13.[BACK](#)

64. Vladimir Prokhvatilov, "Cost of the War," Komsomolskaya Pravda, 27 December 1994 (no page given), as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-248, 27 December 1994, p 20. [BACK](#)

65. CIS news, 1223G, 23 December 1994.[BACK](#)

66. Ostankino TV 29 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-251, 30 December 1994, p 11, 12.[BACK](#)

67. See ftn 115.[BACK](#)

68. Ibid., p 8, 9.[BACK](#)

69. ITAR-TASS 23 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-247, 23 December 1994, p 19, 20.[BACK](#)

70. Vladimir Socor, "Spillover Effect in Caucasus," Sovset, RFE/RL, 15 December 1994.[BACK](#)

71. The term refers to followers of Stephen Bandera, an anti-Soviet partisan during World War II. In Soviet times, the term was used to anathematize Ukrainians who fought for Ukraine independence.[BACK](#)

72. INTERFAX 1625 GMT 23 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-248, 27 December 1994, p 8.[BACK](#)

73. CIS news, item 1219F, 19 December 1994.[BACK](#)

74. ITAR-TASS 1425 GMT 26 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-248, 27 December 1994, p 7.[BACK](#)

75. ITAR-TASS 29 December 1994, as reported in FBIS-SOV-94-251, 30 December 1994, p 4.[BACK](#)